



RMC Agriculture Committee Meeting Minutes

Date: July 13, 2022

Time: 4:00 pm to 5:00 pm

Type: Zoom Teleconference

Participants: Matt Teffeu (Committee Chair), Mike Thielke, Susan Harrison, Holly Porter, Grace Letherman, Darren Jarboe, Nancy Nunn, Shelby Watson-Hampton, Kevin Atticks, Lindsay Thompson, Stacy Kubofcik, Steve McHenry, Charlotte Davis, Amanda Clevenger, Megan D'Arcy.

Committee Chair Matt Teffeu welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order at 4:02pm. Participants introduced themselves. Ms. Charlotte Davis introduced the draft white paper for the Maryland Livestock Processing Assistance Program. Ms. Davis stated that MDA was directed to investigate the State inspected meat processing facilities as there is a concern with part of the process that includes the Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP) plans and microbial sampling and testing. The Committee discussed using RMC funds to assist in paying for costs associated with HACCP plans, sampling and testing as these expenditures have driven out small livestock processors over the years. The Committee further discussed the development of a cost share program for the HACCP plans to assist existing small livestock processors in the amount of \$100,000 in FY2023. The Committee discussed the need to identify a fiscal sponsor to help distribute the grant funds; the criteria to take advantage of the program; and the bandwidth needed to implement the program. The Committee agreed to revisit this discussion at the next meeting with numbers from SMADC and learn what the State is doing through the Task Force. Steve McHenry, Executive Director with MARBIDCO stated that his organization is working on a program to build significant capacity enhancement with federal funding coupled with a half million allocation through MARBIDCO. Mr. McHenry further stated that this program will include a matching component, so applicants are more able to undertake major expansions of existing facilities or build new ones.

Committee Chair Matt Teffeu stated that the Governor's Intergovernmental Commission for Agriculture (GICA) is another vehicle for policy and that we can use this platform to bring important agriculture issues to the forefront. The Committee discussed and agreed that the State Department and Taxation real estate assessment in relation to those farms offering value added operations should be a priority talking point for GICA.

The Committee discussed the Farmer Mental Health Program, and the Committee would like to see the successes from this program highlighted. The Committee discussed the challenges with lack of mental health providers in rural areas.

Committee Chair Matt Teffeu shared that the Grow & Fortify Summit will take place on December 1, 2022, at the Chesapeake Bay Beach Club. Kevin Atticks, Executive Director with Grow & Fortify thanked RMC, Farm Credit, and the Chesapeake Ag Center for partnering on the event and stated that it will be a great opportunity to bring together all the different segments of value-added agriculture, policy makers, and people in support of value-added.

The Committee discussed the next meeting taking place before the RMC September Board Meeting and RMC staff will send out a Doodle poll to the Committee to pick the best date.

Committee Chair Matt Teffeu thanked everyone for joining the meeting and asked for a motion to adjourn the meeting. Steven McHenry made the motion to adjourn, Mike Thielke seconded the motion. The meeting adjourned at 4:45pm.